4

A

LETTER

ON

George Keith's

ADVERTISEMENT

OF

An Intended Meeting

AT

Turners-Hall,

The 29th of *April*, 1697.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by *T. Sowle*, near the *Meeting-House* in *White-Hart-Court* in *Gracious-Street*, and at the *Bible* in *Leaden-Hall-Street*, 1697.

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF
FRIENDS HISTORICAL LIBRARY
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
Feb. 7, 1935

Mrs. Sowle,

HAving Received this, I thought good to ſend it to You; who, I underſtand, Print for the Quakers, *and ſome others, who are Perſons of Moderation; and if you think fit to Print this, may.*

Vale.

A LETTER ON George Keith's ADVERTISEMENT, &c.

My Good Friend,

IT's a Kindneſs to be accomodated with that by which one can either reap Pleaſure or Profit, but the *Advertiſment* I received, affords neither to a Quiet Mind, or Chriſtian Spirit.

I intreat the Favour of a few Lines to adviſe me what this *Geo. Keith* is; for, to me, he doth appear Peremptory, Singular, and his deſign of an Ill Tendency.

1. *Peremptory*, becauſe he takes upon him to appoint a Meeting, fix time and place; and then, in his own Proceedings, to be ſo far Judge, as Confidently to Affirm the Perſons he mentions are juſtly Deſired to be preſent, as if his ſo Saying were ſufficient Proof, that he hath ſuch a Power

as to Summon whom he pleaſes, Charge, Recharge, and prove Guilty in their Abſence, and unheard; and if they anſwer not his Deſire, he'll Try, Sentence, and Condemn them, taking all *Pro Confeſſo*, that he Suggeſts, if they yield not Obedience to him, and apear not at his high Commiſſion Court.

2. It's *Singular*, at leaſt to me, for any *Perſon* Concern'd in a Controverſy, that is expoſed in publick *Prints* (as I perceived this between him and the *Quakers* is) to aſſume ſuch a *Power* and Method of Anſwering as he doth.

3. And the Deſign and Conſequence of which Method, at this time of the Day, to me ſeems very ill, tending to raiſe *Feuds*, *Animoſities* and *Prejudices* amongſt *Proteſtants*; and for any pretending to be *Proteſtant* Diſſenters, as theſe *Quakers* do (and indeed in what do they differ from us, but in the Sacraments, Ceremonies, and a ſtricter way of Living) and as ſuch, are Recognized by the *Parliament*, to be concerned in ſuch a Work, will raiſe a ſtrong Jealouſie in many that the Fomenters and Propagators of ſuch Aſſemblies for ſuch pretended Ends, as are propoſed, are really Influenced by ſome *Popiſh* Agent, or that they are themſelves ſo Inclined, and by ſuch ways would bring the *Proteſtant* Religion into Contempt, by Rendering them ſo Divided, and Guilty of ſuch Groſs Errors and Hereſies; and the next word, ready to come forth, is Heretick, and then away with theſe Hereticks, better ſome cut off and Deſtroyed, than ſuffered to Live to Infect the Flock.

And notwithſtanding the *Parentheſis* which *G. K.* claps in, when he Inſtigates the Chriſtian Teachers, to oppoſe the words *Gangrene* and *Contagion*, which, he ſaith, hath, and doth at preſent Infect many Thouſands to me; ſhews

shews his Inclinations to have other Weapons made use of, than only Spiritual: Therefore,

Pray inform me what this desperate *Viragoe*, this busie and officious Agent is, how looked upon, Countenanced, or Contemned by Authority in your great City; seeing he writes that his Meeting is by their Permission, to detect the Vile and Gross Errors of *William Penn*, *Thomas Ellwood*, *George Whitehead*, *John Penington*, and their Second Days Weekly Meeting, as he calls it.

Surely, if the Civil Authority, whose Business is to preserve the Peace, were desirous to have the Errors and Heresies of these Men Exposed, they should not Employ such an one, but rather had this matter well weighed and considered by some Divine, Able, Judicious and Moderate Persons that were Capable to use such proper ways and methods that might Demonstrate they sought their Conviction, and Return out of those Errors (if they, or any in this Nation, are guilty thereof) than to imploy such an Agent, who appears more desirous to Charge, Recharge, and Prove those Persons Guilty in their Absence, and in such a confused, mixt and unthinking Assembly (as such commonly are) than to make use of that way of Replying to publick Print, or seeking in a Spirit of Meekness according to the Apostolick Doctrine to restore them; but if it be from a Conscientiousness of his own Inability, either truly to do the one, or rightly to do the other, it shews his Prejudice and Subtilty: And surely our Church, and the truly Pious and Learned among us, want no Assistance from such an one as this *Geo. Keith* appears to be, that still pretends to *Quakerism*, and to be a Dissenter of that sort, who pretend that Tythes are not to be paid of *Divine Right*, neither are they in any part of the *New Testament*, by the direction of the Testator to be paid as such unto Gospel Ministers for their Maintenance.

And

And the *Quakers* are such a People that will not carry their Children to the Minister to be Baptized, neither will they pay for it, nor the Dues to the Minister of the Parish for Churching of Women, nor Burials; neither do they like our Fonts, Bells, Surplices, and Cushions, Communion-Tables, nor Carpitts; but rather Esteem them Popish Institutions.

Now these things Considered, with what is before hinted, How can the Civil Authority Permit, or the Ecclesiastical Encourage such an Angry, Hot, Rigid, Dissenting *Quaker* in this Work?

For my part, as little Wit as the *Quakers* may be esteemed to have; I shall conclude them, besides that little to meet this Busie, Confident, Officious Tool; that, I fear, hath not Wit enough to see how he is made use of, or to consider how easie it is for others to see him, and his Work, and the Tendency and End thereof is neither Just nor Christian——But,

Brings, to my Rememberance, a Story, I have heard of some Insincere Popish *Priests*; who, to beget a Credit in some *Protestants* of their pretended Miracles, prevailed with an old Woman to feign her self Lame, which she did, and also was instructed to pretend to have had some Dream or Vision, and that therein it was told her, If she did Wash on such a Day, in such a particular place, and had one of her Priests to say so many *Masses* or *Ave-Maries*, she should be Cured, and notice was given thereof (as this *G. K.* doth of his Intended Meeting) the Protestants came to see, but not being Privy to the Juggle nor Design of those that set the thing to Work, came away struck with Admiration, and were ready (as many simple People may be in *Geo. Keith*'s Meeting) to conclude some notable thing was done. But it so fell out, that this deceipt was not easie to the

the Poor Woman that was Inſtrumental in the Cheat, and ſhe was willing in her Confeſſion to a *Ghoſtly Father*, of whom ſhe had heard a good Fame, to divulge the whole Trick to him; who, altho' of the ſame Profeſſion, but more wiſe and ſincere than the deſigning Prieſt that wanted (as *G. K.* may) a Popular Applauſe to Injoyn the Woman to Confeſs the Truth; telling her, The Church had no need of ſuch methods to ſupport her Power; and I alſo think, our Church hath no need to Countenance or Encourage any ſuch Diſſenting and Deſigning Agents, that ſeek themſelves more than her true Honour, or the Advancing their particular Intereſt, or venting their Prejudices more than ſeeking the Honour of the *Church* or *Chriſtian Religion*, and I hope there are ſome ſuch Fathers among us, that have more Sincerity and Wiſdom, than to Countenance ſuch Perſons or Things, but when they ſee it needful to detect Error, and reclaim Hereticks, will uſe more Proper and Chriſtian Methods, that ſhall rather reach their Conſciences, and convince their Underſtandings, than expoſe the *Quakers* and *Religion* in *General* to the Scorn and Laughter of ſuch a mixt and heedleſs Number, and themſelves to the Slight and Contempt of thoſe they pretend to Reclaim.

And conſidering the Day this *G. Keith* hath made choice of, for his Work is the Day after that Authority hath appointed for a publick Faſt; and he pretending to Act by their Permiſſion, I thought meet to add the following Text, that every one may ſee how he anſwers Authority, and the true End of a Chriſtian Faſt.

Behold ye Faſt for Strife and Debate, and to ſmite with the Fiſt of Wickedneſs; ye ſhall not Faſt as ye do this Day, to make your Voice to be heard on High, Iſa. 58. 4.

FINIS.